

prefers sugary food sources. Some people suffer a slight, red irritation of the skin following contact with this ant.

### *Formicinae*

#### *Camponotus compressus* (Fabricius, 1787)

*Distribution.* A common Indian species which occurs in a wide range of ecosystems. The first record for Arabia is from Al Ain where many males and some queens were found under a packing crate.

*Biology and ecology.* This large, black ant feeds on aphids and often forms strong colonies with several hundred workers. Individuals range from 7–18 mm long. If it becomes well established, it could out-compete similar indigenous species, such as *Camponotus fellah* Dalla Torre, 1893 or *Camponotus xerxes* Forel, 1904. It is not normally recorded from houses.

#### *Paratrechina flavipes* (Smith, 1874)

*Distribution.* An oriental species of supposedly Japanese origin which has spread via imported plant material to U.S.A. It is often found in greenhouses in Europe. This ant has only recently been recorded in Arabia. It was found on several occasions in the UAE, for example parks in Al Ain and Abu Dhabi, Ras al Khaimah, Khor Kalba and Jumeira.

*Biology and ecology.* This species is not considered to be a pest although it is common in parks and gardens. Workers are small, with a body length of around 2.5 mm.

#### *Paratrechina jaegerskioldi* Mayr, 1904

*Distribution.* Well known throughout the Middle East and probably distributed through plant material. The first records for the UAE are from gardens in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, and from Khor Kalba.

*Biology and ecology.* This small ant, about 2.5 mm long, is a potential nuisance pest and is frequently reported in Arabia infesting human habitation, especially kitchens and bathrooms. It often occurs outside in irrigated and shaded areas.

#### *Paratrechina longicornis* (Latreille, 1802)

*Distribution.* A cosmopolitan species of unknown origin and probably the most widely distributed tramp ant. This species is well established on farms, oases and irrigated areas across Arabia. It was abundant in hotels' gardens and parks throughout the UAE including Ruwais, Al Ain and Al Mudam, and probably occurs in all irrigated areas.

*Biology and ecology.* This species generally lives outside although in temperate regions it sometimes occurs in warm houses. It is small, between 2.5–3 mm long, but very conspicuous because of its dark brown to black coloration. It is very fast moving and commonly forms wide but thinly populous trails up to 0.5 m wide over walls and floors.